

Amendments to the Claims

1-15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently amended) A method, embodied in a computer readable medium, ~~using a computer system~~, for a collaborating author to respond to a request to review a replica of an original document sent by a managing author, said method comprising:

editing said replica, said editing forming an edited replica; and

creating a difference file using said replica and said edited replica;

wherein said difference file contains changes the collaborating author has made and memory positions of unchanged segments of the unedited replica; and said difference file is stored in memory for later access.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein said editing said replica is based on editing privileges set by said managing author.

18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16 further comprising:

generating a response file comprising XML data and said difference file, said XML data comprising an item identifying said collaborating author; and

encrypting said response file.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18 wherein said XML data further comprises a unique identifier identifying said response file.

20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 17 further comprising:

receiving an EDF file;

decrypting said EDF file; and

extracting said replica and said editing privileges from said EDF file.

21. (Currently amended) The method of claim 16 wherein said replica is a [[Word]] word processing document.

22. (Currently amended) A method, using a computer system, for generating a response to an unedited replica of an original document sent by a managing author to a contributing author for review, comprising:

forming a revised replica by editing said unedited replica;

partitioning said unedited replica into a first plurality of segments;

sorting segments of said first plurality of segments into a binary tree based on a comparison operator;

partitioning said revised replica into a second plurality of segments;

for a segment of said second plurality of segments, finding a best match in said binary tree to form a block of at least one matching byte;

and

creating a difference file comprising said block, wherein said difference file is stored in memory to be transmitted to the managing author.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22 further comprising extending said block by matching bytes on both sides of said block.

24. (Original) The method of claim 22 wherein a segment of said first plurality of segments is delimited by a delimiter.

25. (Original) The method of claim 22 wherein said best match comprises an exact match.

26. (Original) The method of claim 22 wherein said best match comprises a partial match.

27–29. (Cancelled)

30. (Previously presented) A data structure stored in a computer readable medium for providing an edited replica from a contributing author to a managing author, said data structure comprising:

data comprising an identification of said contributing author; and

a difference file formed from using said edited replica in conjunction with an unedited replica.

31. (Original) The data structure of claim 30 wherein said data is in eXtensible Markup Language (XML) format.

32. (Original) The data structure of claim 31 wherein said data further comprises an e-mail address for said contributing author.

33. (Original) The data structure of claim 31 wherein only said data is encrypted when said data structure is sent to said managing author via a communications network.

34. (Previously presented) The data structure of claim 30 wherein at least said difference file is encrypted when said data structure is sent to said managing author via a communications network.

35. (Currently amended) A system for distributive processing of a plurality of comparisons between a replica sent by a managing author and a plurality of edited replicas edited by a plurality of contributing authors, comprising:

a first computer system for creating said replica from said original document;

a plurality of second computer systems for receiving said replica, wherein each second computer system of said plurality of second computer systems comprises:

a word processing module for editing said replica by a contributing author of said plurality of contributing authors to form an edited replica of said plurality of edited replicas; and

a difference module for producing a difference file from said edited replica and said replica, wherein said difference file stored in memory for later access to reconstruct said edited replica.

36.-62. (Cancelled).

63. (New) A method, embodied in a computer system, for generating a response to an unedited replica of an original document sent by a managing author to a contributing author for review, comprising:

forming a first revised replica by editing said unedited replica;

partitioning said unedited replica into a first plurality of segments;

sorting segments of said first plurality of segments into a binary tree based on a comparison operator;

partitioning said first revised replica into a second plurality of segments;

finding a best match for a segment of said second plurality of segments in said binary tree to form a block of at least one matching byte;

creating a difference file; said difference file comprising: a plurality of copy packets and a plurality of difference packets;

said copy packets indicating positions and lengths of said matched blocks;

said difference packets consisting of stream of bytes flanked by two said copy packets;

wherein said difference file is stored in memory to be transmitted to the managing author;

transmitting the difference file to the managing author;

reconstructing the revised replica by

finding in the original document said matched blocks using their memory positions and lengths as indicated in the copy packets;

forming a second revised replica identical to the first revised replica by copying said matched-blocks into the second revised replica and inserting the difference packets into the second revised replica.